

The Angel of Purgatory.

HOW MANY SWEET REMINISCENCES THIS TITLE
RECALLS TO A CHRISTIAN MIND.

Why the Souls in Purgatory are Called "Poor Souls."

A short time ago a fervent young priest of this country had the following conversation with a holy bishop on his way to Rome. The bishop said to him: "You make mementos, now and then, for friends of yours that are dead,—do you not?" The young priest answered: "Certainly, I do so very often." The bishop rejoined: "So did I when I was a young priest. But one time I was grievously ill. I was given up as about to die. I received Extreme Unction and the Viaticum. It was then that my whole past life with all its failings and all its sins came before me with startling vividness. I saw how much I had to atone for, and I reflected on how few Masses would be said for me, and how few prayers! Ever since my recovery I have most fervently offered the Holy Sacrifice for the repose of the pious and patient souls in Purgatory, and I am always glad when I can, as my own offering, make the 'intention' of my Masses for the relief of the poor souls."

Indeed, dear reader, no one is more deserving of Christian charity and sympathy than the poor souls in Purgatory. They are really Poor Souls. No one is sooner forgotten than they are.

How soon their friends persuade themselves that they are in perfect peace? How little they do for their relief, when their bodies are buried? There is a lavish expense for the funeral. A hundred dollars are spent, when the means of the family hardly justify the half of it. Where there is more wealth, sometimes five hundred or a thousand, and even more dollars are expended on the poor dead body.

But let me ask what is done for the poor living soul? Perhaps the poor soul is suffering the most frightful tortures in Purgatory, whilst the lifeless body is laid out in state, and borne pompously to the graveyard. You must not misunderstand me; it is right and just, to show all due respect even to the body of your deceased friend, for the body was once the dwelling place of his soul. But tell me candidly, what joy has the departed, and, perhaps, suffering soul in the music of the choir, even should the choir be composed of the best (opera) singers in the country? What consolation does the poor suffering soul feel in the superb coffin, in the splendid funeral? What pleasure does the soul find in the costly marble monument, in all the honors that are so freely lavished on the body? All this may satisfy, or at least seem to satisfy, the living, but it is of no avail whatever to the dead.

Poor unhappy souls! How the diminution of true Catholic faith is visited upon you while you suffer, and those that loved you in life, might help you, and do not, for want of knowledge or of faith.

Poor unhappy souls! your friends go to their business, to their eating and drinking, with the foolish assurance that the case cannot be hard on one they knew to be so good. Oh, how much and how long this false charity of your friends makes you suffer!

The venerable Sister Catharine Paluzzi offered up, for a long time, and with the utmost fervor, prayers and pious works for the soul of her deceased father. At last she had good reason to believe that her father was already enjoying the bliss of Paradise. But how great was her consternation and grief when our Lord, in company with St. Catharine, her patroness, led her one day, in spirit, to Purgatory. There she beheld her father in an abyss of torments, imploring her assistance. At